

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-11 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 AID-20 OMB-01 DRC-01 IO-14 NIC-01 CU-05

EB-11 EA-11 ACDA-19 NEA-14 SAM-01 /217 W

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R 180925Z SEP 74

FM AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4459

INFO AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUJUMBURA 0572

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XA, BY, SO

SUBJECT: VISIT OF SOMALI PRESIDENT TO BURUNDI

SUMMARY: BURUNDI RECEIVED A FURTHER NOD OF AFRICAN ACCEPTANCE, BUT PRECIOUS LITTLE ELSE OF VISIBLE SUBSTANCE, FROM THE EXPENSIVE CEREMONIES AND PROTOCOL LAVISHED ON THE VISITING SOMALI PRESIDENT. END SUMMARY.

ALTHOUGH THOSE AFFLICTED WITH "LOCALITIS" IN OTHER AFRICAN CAPITALS MAY NOT HAVE PAID SUFFICIENT HEED, BIG CONTINENTAL EVENT OF LAST WEEK WAS SOMALI-BURUNDI LOVE FEST, UNLEASHED BY THE SEPT 9 TO 12 VISIT OF SIAD-BARRE TO BUJUMBURA. MEETINGS, SPEECHES, BANQUETS, MOTORCADES, LAYING OF WREATHS, AWARD OF HIGH DECORATIONS, SPECIAL EDITIONS OF PAPERS, HELICOPTER JAUNTS TO THE INTERIOR, AND (AS THE COMMUNIQUE TELLS US) LONG PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS BETWEEN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE TWO PRESIDENTS WERE THE DOMINANT

FEATURES OF THIS MAJOR EFFORT

TO PROMOTE PAN-AFRICAN SOLIDARITY. THOSE WHO DECRY THE EXPENSIVE OSTENTATION (INCLUDING TWO WORKDAYS ALMOST WHOLLY TRANSMUTED INTO HOLIDAYS IN THE CAPITAL) AND THE MINISCULE QUOTIENT OF SUBSTANCE IN THE PROCEEDINGS ARE OBVIOUSLY MEN OF SMALL MINDS, WHO WOULD DENY TO THE LEADERS OF THE POOREST OF LDCS SOME DIVERSIONS FROM THEIR HEAVY BURDENS.

THE DISTINGUISHED AND ALWAYS DIGNIFIED GUEST HAD A GOOD BIT TO SAY ABOUT THE PROGRESS OF SOMALIA SINCE THE START OF HIS REGIME, WHERE, DESPITE RATHER UNFAVORABLE ENDOWMENT FROM NATURE, THERE HAD LATELY BEEN

AN ECONOMIC UPSURGE, REDUCED ILLITERACY, AND MORE SOCIAL JUSTICE-- ALL BASED ON NATIONAL MOBILIZATION, GREAT COHESION, AND SELF-HELP. HOWEVER, HIS MAIN AND OFT-REPEATED MESSAGE, AS BEFITTED A MAN WHO IS THE CURRENT PRESIDENT OF THE OAU, CONCERNED AFRICAN UNITY, THE DUTY TO FIGHT A CATALOGUE OF BOTH FOREIGN SINS (IMPERIALISM, COLONIALISM, NEO-COLONIALISM, ZIONISM, FASCISM, AND RACISM) AND DOMESTIC EVILS (IGNORANCE, SICKNESS, HUNGER, UNDERDEVELOPMENT, AND LACK OF INFRASTRUCTURE). NO ONE IN AFRICA COULD BE FREE UNTIL THE WHOLE CONTINENT WAS LIBERATED, AND HE WOULD SPARE NO EFFORT TO SPEED THE PROCESS. NO PUBLIC MENTION WAS MADE BY HIM OF THE USSR IN ANY CONTEXT.

THE EMBASSY HAS WADED THROUGH THE PILES OF PAPER PRODUCED DURING THE VISIT IN A LARGELY VAIN ATTEMPT TO CATCH A GLIMPSE OF WHATEVER SERIOUS EXCHANGES, RELEVANT TO THE URGENT PROBLEMS FACING THE TWO COUNTRIES, MAY HAVE TAKEN PLACE. MICOMBERO EXPLICITLY ACKNOWLEDGED HIS DEBT TO SIAD-BARRE FOR "MORAL SUPPORT" (I.E., DURING THE 1972 TURMOIL

IN BURUNDI) AND FOR "HIS MATERIAL AID" (PRESUMABLY REFERRING TO THE ONGOING PROGRAM IN SOMALIA TO TRAIN SOME BURUNDI MILITARY SPECIALISTS). THE COMMUNIQUE ALSO REFERS TO "BILATERAL COOPERATION ON THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, COMMERCIAL, DIPLOMATIC, CULTURAL, AND TECHNICAL PLANES", BUT THIS, AS WELL AS THE ANNOUNCED DECISION "TO SIGN A GENERAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT" WILL REMAIN LARGELY WINDOW-DRESSING AND RHETORIC IN VIEW OF THE NON-COMPLEMENTARITY, PHYSICAL SEPARATION, AND BACKWARDNESS OF THE TWO POOR ECONOMIES.

MICOMBERO USED THE VISIT TO REINFORCE THE GRB'S CLAIM TO BE FULLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ACCEPTED BY ALL FELLOW AFRICANS AS DECENT AND LEGITIMATE IN EVERY SENSE AND AS FULLY IN THE MAINSTREAM OF OTHER "PROGRESSIVE" STATES ON WORLD ISSUES. THUS, IN ADDITION TO DENOUNCING COLONIALISM, IMPERIALISM, AND ZIONISM, HE SUPPORTED SIHANOUK, NORTH KOREA, COMMUNIST POSITIONS ON VIETNAM, A GLOBAL REDISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH TO LDCS, AND GENERAL DISARMAMENT. HIS ONLY SLIGHTLY MAVERICK UTTERANCE CAME IN PLEAS TO EUROPEANS TO CONTINUE EC-AFRICAN AND EC-ARAB COOPERATION, AND TO PREVENT THE MOMENTUM FOR EUROPEAN SOLIDARITY

FROM ABORTING.

FOR HIS PART, SIAD-BARRE PRAISED BURUNDI SUCCESSES "IN SPITE OF THE AMBUSHES WHICH IMPERIALISM SETS OUT AGAINST IT" (THUS PARROTING THE GRB VERSION OF THE ORIGIN OF THE 1972 TROUBLES), AND URGED TOTAL UNITY BEHIND MICOMBERO. HOWEVER, HE DID SOUND A NOTE OF CAUTION (AND DID THEREBY GIVE EVIDENCE THAT HE UNDERSTANDS SOME OF THE INTERNAL POLITICAL REALITIES HERE) WHEN, IN AN INTERVIEW, HE SAID THAT IN BURUNDI'S HISTORY, "THERE HAVE BEEN TRIBAL, ETHNIC, REGIONAL, AND RELIGIOUS DIVISIONS, AND HE HOPED THAT THIS WILL NOW BE A CLOSED BOOK".

IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY FOR EMBASSY MOGADISCIO TO SAY WHAT BENEFITS SIAD-BARRE DREW FROM HIS ALMOST THREE DAY INVESTMENT IN BURUNDI (EXTENDED A DAY WHEN NYERERE'S TRAVELS ABROAD PREVENTED A STOP IN DAR ES SALAAM). THE SOVIET AMBASSADOR HERE HAS CONJECTURED THAT THE SOMALIAN PRESIDENT WAS NOT ONLY BURNISHING HIS PAN-AFRICAN STATURE, BUT ALSO BUILDING UP SOME CREDITS WITH MICOMBERO, ON WHICH HE HOPES TO BE ABLE TO DRAW WHEN ISSUES ARISE IN AN AFRICAN CONTEXT WHERE SOMALIA SEEKS EXTERNAL SUPPORT.
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